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TRIBUTE TO MISS ELIZABETH BRYANT JOHNSTON.

By MRS. J. EAKIN GADSBY.

Elizabeth Bryant Johnston—a name synonymous with all that was good, noble, generous and broad, with a quaint touch of the past ever mingling with her up-to-date, present-world's doings. A mind stored with actual pictures of the past of her own times, and much of the general history of the world at her command, a vein of humor ever present in her delightful talks, a touch of pathos in her stories of ante-bellum days, and a familiarity with times and places which will leave its impress of knowledge on all who read her stories of the kind masters and faithful slaves in "The Days that Are No More." She has told so graphically, so touchingly, the relations then existing, bringing in the characters of her own and neighboring families on their Kentucky plantations.

Her greater works on the first President are treasures of historical knowledge to the literary world, and rank with modern classics in their fine diction and record of facts, showing throughout her high trend of thought, and charming personal characteristics in her familiar touch while exhibiting the world's great heroes and authors.

Her book, "Original Portraits of Washington," was published in 1882 by James R. Osgood & Co., Boston. A resolution was offered in the Senate to purchase a large number of them for the Government and was passed by the Senate and received favorably in the House, but held up by its Speaker, Samuel J. Randall. Thus was lost to Government libraries one of the most valuable and thorough histories of Washington portraits and statues. The Osgood publishers failed. The edition was soon exhausted and no second edition has ever been brought out, though Miss Johnston had revised the work, and by the help of her sister, Mrs. Sanders Johnston, was to have published a second edition during this year.

It was at Miss Johnston's suggestion that the seal of the Columbia Historical Society was taken from the clock in the

old House of Representatives, the work of the sculptor Franzoni, early in the nineteenth century. She was very anxious to have this used, as to her it symbolized the passing of Time into History, and to take note of that history and preserve it in its annals was the object for which this Society was organized.

Miss Johnston invited me to become a member of the Columbia Historical Society a number of years ago, and never failed to send me notice of the monthly meeting. The Board of Managers has lost an honored co-worker whose advice was sound and valuable; and the Society, a member whose interest in the historic scenes and doings of the District of Columbia never flagged.

Her "George Washington, Day by Day," was a labor of love and research, bringing the author and her readers in close touch with her hero—the greatest of all the earth's great men. It is a unique work and purely original in its style—giving the great Chief's doings "day by day." Miss Johnston has a quotation from some eminent author at the bottom of each page expressive of his or her opinion of Gen. Washington—comprising in all 365 quotations. Her dedication of this book is a strong expression of her patriotism, "To the children of my country, the army which Washington said could never be conquered." The illustration on the cover shows her pride in the rank and file. "In their ragged regimentals stood the Old Continentals yielding not." Her preface is a breathing, living faith in the power of patriotism and love of country. We quote from Miss Johnston:

"A deeper reverence for the law, and a greater devotion to our national institutions, are the lessons of the day; the very life of the nation depends on sustaining the majesty of the law and instilling into the hearts of American children an earnest reverence for its sacred power."

She has expressed so beautifully her love of country:

"Let love of country become part of our religion, that part which rises above all theories, philosophies, and creeds, uniting us if in nothing else in the divine fellowship of the love of country."

The flag of her country was a sacred emblem to her, and

through her suggestion the "Star Spangled Banner" now waves over all the Government buildings. Meeting Col. Amos Webster, chief clerk of the Treasury, one day, she asked why the United States flag did not wave over every public building. From that she secured, through him, an interview with the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Folger, who issued the order during the Arthur administration, in 1882—since which time the banner of the United States has floated over all its buildings.

Col. Bangs, chief of Railway Postal Service at one time, asked Miss Johnston for a suitable head for our national two-cent stamp. She suggested to him the head of Washington from the Houdon bust as being the most nearly perfect. Her suggestion was adopted, and to her we owe the fine reproduction of our national hero on one of our handsomest stamps.

She has since suggested the head of Pocahontas, to Postmaster General Cortelyou, for one of the Jamestown series.

In her work in the D. A. R. she has given of the best that was in her—work that will be a lasting monument to her in our marble building in which she took so deep an interest. Her beautiful thought of thirteen columns for the south portico, to be given by the thirteen original states, has been carried out and is in course of construction.

Her thought for a "Book of Remembrance" to be placed in Continental Memorial Hall will also be completed. I have undertaken this work as a memorial to Miss Johnston, through her own labor, by trying to raise funds on the last book of her 500 edition of "George Washington, Day by Day"; which fund will be devoted to the purchase of the "Book of Remembrance"—the names of the donors to Continental Memorial Hall to be inscribed therein.

She was a charter member of the Columbia Historical Society and served faithfully on its Board from its organization in 1894. She suggested the Seal of the Society and wrote the history of the Franzoni clock, from which the Seal is taken.

To speak of her Christian character, her utter self-forgetfulness, her tender, loving spirit, and loyal friendship is to tell what we all know of her, and of that which is most sacred in our hearts.